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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Thursday, June 30, 1932

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Tips for the Traveler." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

My Next-Door Neighbor is taking her summer vacation in a week or two. As she says, for us women a holiday trip always brings up the eternal question of clothes. What clothes to wear on the train? How to look cool, fresh and tailored in the dusty heat of the railroad car? What clothes to wear on an automobile trip? How to keep spick and span, clean and unwrinkled, no matter what the weather?

But I don't need to repeat all the questions that come to women's minds when they're on the subject of vacation clothes.

"You see," said My Neighbor, "I want a traveling outfit that is inexpensive, serviceable and smart. I want something that will look nice day in and day out and be cool and comfortable, beside. Now I've been thinking of materials. I want to choose a fabric that won't muss and wrinkle easily. What do you suggest?"

"How about a silk crepe of some sort? An inexpensive crepe, not heavy enough to be uncomfortably hot, but firm enough to wear well? Or how about one of the new cotton materials made especially for what we now call town dresses?"

"Good. Then I need a color that won't show soil. Some dark color, wouldn't you say? Or perhaps a print."

The next problem was the style of the dress. My Neighbor looked over the fashion magazines thoughtfully.

"From what I know of styles this year," said she. "I seem to have three good choices for a traveling outfit. First, I might have one of these three-piece suits. I saw a good-looking one on the street the other day. The trim skirt and jacket were of dark blue heavy crepe. But there was a light blouse which brightened up the outfit. I should think it would be easy to keep looking fresh if you had several blouses to go with this outfit. On the other hand, such a suit with a blouse and skirt, is most becoming to slim figures. And mine, alas, doesn't come under that name any more."

"What about one of those nice one-piece coat dresses with a little jacket to go with it? They are fashioned so smartly this year."

"Just what I was going to mention. I was considering a printed silk of conventional design for such an outfit. Some figured silk in a dark shade

with a short jacket of the same material. When the weather was especially hot, the dress would do without the jacket, even on the street. I believe I'd like a navy blue and white or a brown and beige patterned print. Then I could wear those shoes and neutral hose that are just the right color to go with all dark dresses. And beige washable cotton gloves. And a little dark hat, either blue or brown."

"It sounds very smart. I have a picture of you in that outfit already."

"There's just one more possibility that I'm considering. I'm wondering whether one of my matronly build wouldn't find a long coat even more practical and becoming. A long dark coat or a redingote of a dark plain fabric -- silk or light wool -- with a figured dress to wear under it. I have imagined a black and white printed crepe dress with a long black crepe coat."

"What have you decided about hats?"

"Nothing definite. But when it comes to something for steady use and hard wear such as a hat is sure to get in traveling, I'm for a model that is soft and simple, a hat that the porter can jam into a bag without making me wince. A fabric hat with a stitched brim is serviceable. And so is a soft tight cloche."

After this talk with My Neighbor I went over to see what Miss Scott, our friend the clothing specialist, had to say about traveling clothes.

"Comfort is one big item to consider when you are dressing for traveling," said Miss Scott. "The most comfortable garments for warm weather don't hold heat, are light in construction to allow ventilation, and are easily cleaned. But there are still other important points to consider when a garment is to go traveling. It mustn't soil or wrinkle easily. And these points may rule out many cottons and linens. A white linen frock that you can tub and iron so easily at home and so keep looking fresh as a daisy, will soon lose its freshness on a hot car. Maybe some day when all trains are specially cooled and when coal dust and cinders are no longer flying about, we can wear our light linens and cottons on our travels, but not now. Dresses have too much of a struggle against soot, heat and big hot plush seats."

In general thin, soft silks or town cottons in dark colors brightened by light blouses or by collars and vestees are usually the most practical for summer travel.

And here's a point about keeping your dress looking fresh. Since skirts are very likely to crease in the back on the train, especially if there are pleats or gathers where one must sit on them, it's a help to wear a rubber apron underneath to prevent wrinkles.

"What colors would you choose for a traveling outfit?" I asked Miss Scott.

"Both blue and brown are very much in vogue this year. Why not have an outfit in dark blue or brown? Or, black? Black can be counted upon this year as always. It is the perennial smart color. Speaking of dark blue for traveling, a friend of mine who travels a great deal has a very attractive and

serviceable wash silk crepe suit made of a fine blue and white check. This color scheme makes it possible to wear the suit on different occasions. In traveling she wears it with a dark blue hat, dark shoes and other accessories. While visiting she makes it into a summer outfit by wearing white accessories. These bring out the white checks and make the dress look lighter in color."

"Gloves?" I inquired. "Oh, yes. And shoes and hose?"

"In summer, washable light gloves give the outfit an immaculate look. That is, if the gloves themselves are spotless. This requires frequent washing. If you own several pairs and wash them often, you can always have a fresh pair ready. With dark brown or blue outfits, gloves to match are always correct too. As for shoes, the most important item is to have them comfortable. I'll never forget a trip I took with a friend of mine who was wearing a pair of new, extremely smart but extremely high-heeled, uncomfortable pumps. The whole trip was ruined for her and almost ruined for me. Watch your step when you select your shoes. Those that are soft, with a dull finish and a medium heel are best. Avoid patent leather because it is too dressy for travel and it is likely to make the feet too hot. Hose? Well, choose the color that tones in with the rest of the clothes -- not too light nor too dark to be conspicuous."

I asked for a few pointers about packing clothes successfully. Miss Scott is an expert on the subject. You perhaps know, that she sends exhibits of children's clothes all over the country from the Bureau of Home Economics. These small garments are packed so well that they aren't wrinkled when they arrive and are hung up for mothers to see.

I'll have to chat about Miss Scott's exhibit one of these days soon, since it will stay on my mind.

What are some of the secrets of packing? How can you put your best clothes in a suitcase and have them come out ready to wear without pressing?

If you possibly can, carry two bags on a long trip. A small bag holds powder, brush, comb, soap and other toilet articles, as well as one's night garments -- gown or pajamas, wrap and slippers. A larger suitcase holds dresses and other clothes which need only be disturbed when you need a change of clothing. However, if everything must go in one suitcase, pack the small articles in the bottom. Stockings and underwear may be packed around them to make an even layer and prevent them from shifting about. Then lay in a piece of cardboard cut to fit the case. If you have no cardboard a piece of stiff or folded paper will be better than nothing. On top lay the dresses, each one carefully folded with paper laid between the folds. It is often a good plan to have several cardboard pieces for the dresses. Slip one up inside the dress, fold the dress over it and pin it carefully. You know how men's shirts are fixed by the laundry. This is a little extra work, to be sure, but it is well worth it. Dresses come out in apple-pie order and need very little, if any, pressing.

Tomorrow: "Entertaining on the Fourth." I'll have a menu for a Fourth of July dinner ready for you.



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